

Not Guilty by Reason of Neuroscience

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Slate Magazine:

On Feb. 19, 1997, a house painter called 911 in Tampa, Fla. He had returned unannounced to a client's house and through a window saw what appeared to be a naked man throttling a naked woman. When the police arrived, they learned the man hadn't just strangled Roxanne Hayes; he had stabbed the mother-of-three multiple times, killing her.

The murderer's name was Lawrence Singleton; he was 69 years old, and he was notorious in California, where 19 years before, he had raped a 15-year-old hitchhiker, Mary Vincent; hacked off her forearms; and left her in a canyon to die. Two vacationers came across her the next morning, walking naked toward the interstate, the stumps of her severed arms raised to prevent further blood loss. Vincent's description of her attacker was so vivid that it resulted in a police artist's drawing that his neighbor recognized. Singleton was tried, found guilty, and given what was the maximum sentence at the time in California of 14 years. He was released on parole, however, after eight years of "good behavior," even though shortly before his release a prison psychiatric evaluation read, "Because he is so out of touch with his hostility and anger, he remains an elevated threat to others' safety inside and outside prison." Mary's mother, Lucy Vincent, said that Mary's father would carry a .45-caliber pistol and often contemplated killing Singleton.

Read the full story: [Slate Magazine](#)